黒異本
［原作］外薗昌也
［作画］高港基資
BAMBOO COMICS TAKE SHOBO

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黒異本 くろいほん

[原作]
外薗昌也

[作画]
高港基資

TAKE SHOBO

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Story 1: - **Dying Alone**

UP THERE.

THAT ROOM ON THE FOURTH FLOOR.

I WAS SENT TO THIS APARTMENT COMPLEX TO CHANGE OUT A SET OF LOCKS.

I'M AN EMPLOYEE AT A HOUSEHOLD SERVICING COMPANY.

.....

NO, IT FEELS ALMOST... BLACK.

IT'S DARK...

JUST THE WINDOW OF THAT ONE ROOM...

AS YOU CAN SEE, THE MAIL SLOT'S ALL BACKED UP. BUT THE ELECTRIC METER JUST KEEPS ON RUNNING. SO...

THERE'S A YOUNG GUY THAT LIVES HERE, BUT NO ONE'S SEEN HIM IN A FEW DAYS.

I'M REAL SORRY.

I'M NO GOOD AT HANDLING STUFF LIKE THIS.

SORRY, KID.

MR. MANA-GER!!

GEH!!

IT MIGHT BE A CASE OF **THAT**.

MR. MAN-AGER,

H- HERE'S THE MASTER KEY!

.....

THE ENTRY INTO AND INVESTIGATION OF APARTMENTS WHERE THE OCCUPANT IS SUSPECTED TO HAVE DIED.

SIGH...

IN ADDITION TO MINOR HOUSEHOLD REPAIRS, MY JOB ENTAILS ONE OTHER FUNCTION.

I CONDUCT SUCH INVESTI-GATIONS MANY TIMES A YEAR, BUT THERE'S NO WAY ANY-BODY COULD GET USED TO SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

TH-THIS IS...

SOOT!!

!

sniff
sniff

THE STENCH OF BURNT PLASTIC?!

IS SOMETHING BURNING?!

CREAK

ドン

AND THE AIR IS HOT...

SOOT ALL OVER...

BUT THIS SMELL...

IF I GO AROUND THAT CORNER, WILL I FIND SOMEONE ON FIRE?

IT'S THE SMELL OF CHARRED HAIR!

IT'S DARK.

TOO DARK...

カラ

カラ

TH-THIS ROOM...

DID THE ROOM AND THE WINDOW GET SO BLACK JUST FROM ALL THE SOOT...?

!

BEER BOT-TLES?!

GUH!

HE-
HE'S
BEEN
BURNED
ALIVE!!

SOME PLACES ARE BURNT TO A CRISP, BUT OTHER PARTS OF HIM AREN'T BURNT AT ALL...

WH- WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED HERE?

!

CHEE CHEE CHEE

CHEE

CHEEE

EEK!!

GUWAAOOOH

HYAAH!

GUWAAOOOOOH

!

GWAGGWAGGWAGGWAGGWAGGWA

むにゃ

むに

むに

むにゃ

むに

むにゃ

むに

むに

ゴゴゴ

ACCORDING TO THE POLICE REPORT, THE YOUNG MAN MUST HAVE BEEN SMOKING A CIGA-RETTE IN BED WHEN HE ACCIDENTALLY FELL ASLEEP.

THE CORPSE WAS THAT OF THE OVERWEIGHT YOUNG MAN WHO RESIDED THERE. HE WAS SAID TO BE AN ESPECIALLY HEAVY DRINKER.

AND SLOWLY, SLOWLY BURNED HIM ALIVE.

THAT'S WHEN THE FIRE MUST HAVE ERUPTED. IT MUST HAVE USED THE ALCOHOL LEFT IN THE BOTTLES SCATTERED AROUND HIM AS FUEL...

I KNEW BETTER THAN ANYONE THAT MICE COULDN'T EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM.

I WAS THE ONLY PERSON TO SEE THAT.

AFTER RUMORS BEGAN TO CIRCULATE THAT I MUST BE ON SOME KIND OF WEIRD DRUG, I GAVE UP.

BAS-TARDS!

HOWEVER MUCH I IN-SISTED THAT WHAT I HAD WITNESSED HAD REALLY HAPPENED, NO ONE WOULD BE-LIEVE ME.

YOU WANT ME TO HEAD OVER TO APARTMENT COMPLEX S THIS AFTER-NOON?

YEAH, IT'S ME.

EH?

BZZZZ BZZZZ BZZZZ

WHAAAT? ANOTHER APARTMENT WHERE THE MAIL'S ALL BACKED UP??

END

OCTOBER 1977. SAITAMA PREFECTURE.

IT WAS A RAINY DAY. UCCHI AND I WERE PLAYING TOGETHER.

?!

WOW! FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE!

ROYAL STRAIGHT FLUSH!

Story 2:

Red Devil

AH...

WAH!

I WAS DREAM-ING...?

UCCHI...

YO!

!

BWHA HAHA!

IT'S NOT LIKE I'M A HOMO OR ANYTHING, OKAY?!

YOU WERE IN MY DREAM LAST NIGHT.

YOU SEE ME EVERY DAY. WE HANG OUT AFTER SCHOOL ALMOST EVERY DAY, AND NOW YOU WANT ME IN YOUR DREAMS, TOO?!

THAT WAS THE DAY STRANGE THINGS STARTED TO HAPPEN.

HIS SKIN TURNED DRY AS A BONE. HIS HAIR GOT MESSIER AND MESSIER.

EVERY DAY, UCCHI GOT FILTHIER AND FILTHIER.

SOON, HE BEGAN TO GIVE OFF A TERRIBLE SMELL.

.....

I COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE HIM IN SUCH A STATE AND FORCED HIM TO COME WITH ME TO A BATHHOUSE TO CLEAN UP.

CRUN CRUN NCHHC

BLB BLB

SST

HII

WHY ARE YOU SPACING OUT?

LET'S GET A WASHIN'!

!

FEELS GREAT, RIGHT?!

SO?

YEAH.

AFTER THAT, UCCHI BEGAN TO CRUMBLE A LITTLE BIT MORE EVERY DAY.

ALL THE WHILE, ALL OF OUR CLASS-MATES AND ALL THE ADULTS AROUND US ACTED AS THOUGH EVERYTHING WAS NORMAL.

THE DAY WE GRADUATED, UCCHI WAITED FOR ME JUST OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL GATE.

BY THEN, HE NO LONGER RETAINED EVEN HUMAN SHAPE.

S- SO... TODAY WE... SAY... B- BYE... BYE...

I... I'M MOVING TODAY...

UCCHI! WAIT!

UCC HI!

B.. BUT I'LL GIVE YOU MY ADDRESS. SO COME OVER AND PLAY ANY TIME, OKAY?

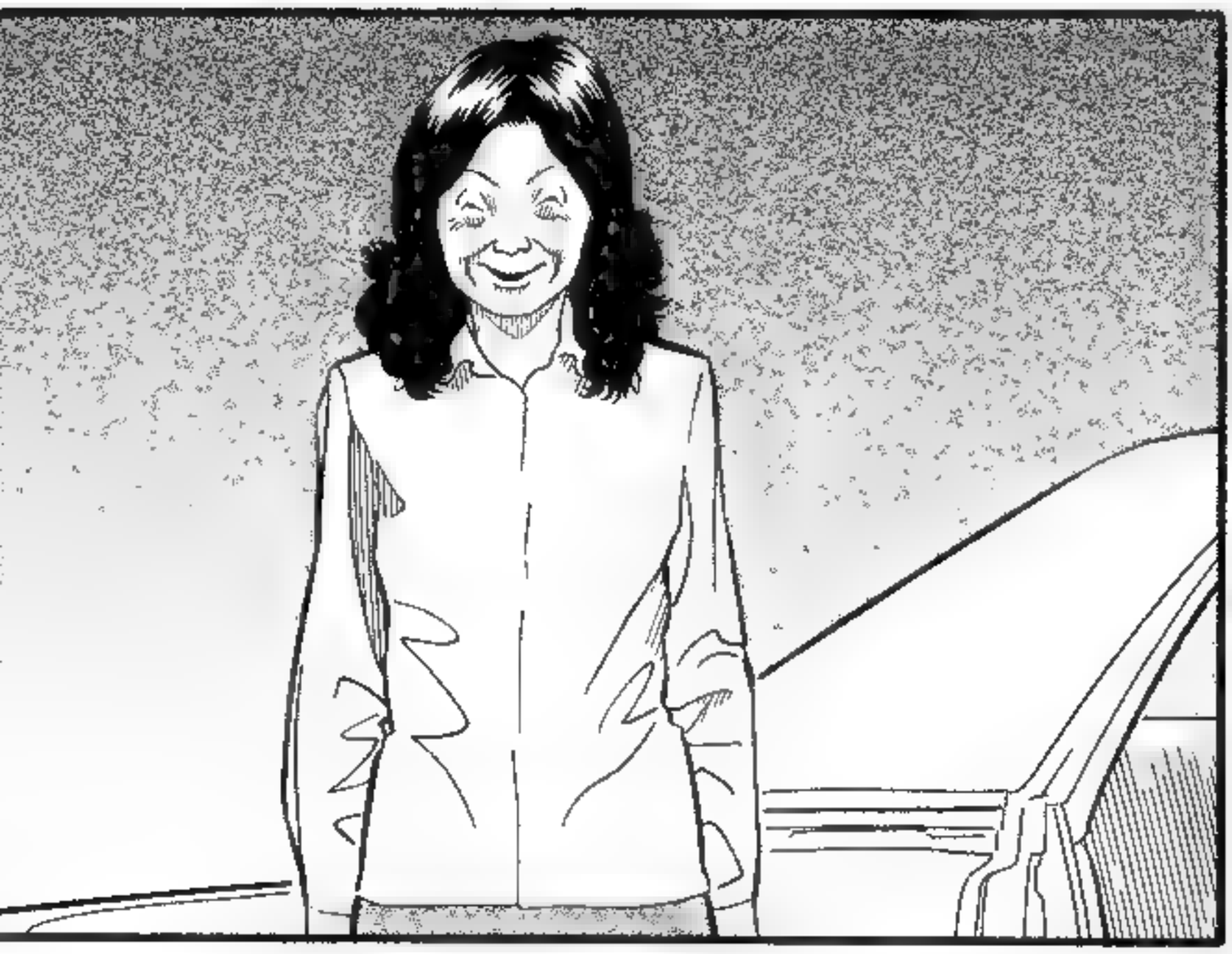
'KAY?

'CAUSE WE'LL ALWAYS BE FRIENDS,

EH?

?!

EH?!



UCCHI

UCCHI

!

AH!

EH?! A DREAM?!

LIFE-THREATENING INJURIES HAD LEFT ME UNCONSCIOUS UNTIL THAT VERY MINUTE.

MOM...

DAD...

FOR SOME DAYS AFTER, I COULD NOT DETERMINE WHETHER THE EVENTS UNFOLDING BEFORE ME WERE THOSE OF REAL LIFE OR BUT THE CONTINUATION OF MY DREAM.

IT MIGHT NOT BE SOMETHING THAT YOU WANT TO REMEMBER, BUT IT IS TERRIBLY IMPORTANT THAT YOU TRY TO.

PLEASE TELL ME ANYTHING THAT YOU CAN RECALL.

WHEN MY HEAD FINALLY CLEARED, A DETECTIVE CAME TO SEE ME.

THE DAY I HAD THAT WEIRD DREAM?!

?

ON OCTOBER 3RD, YOU WENT OVER TO NAKANAI-KUN'S HOUSE TO PLAY WITH HIM, RIGHT?

AH!

IT WAS A VERY, VERY RAINY DAY.

THEN IT WASN'T JUST A DREAM? THEN I REALLY DID GO OVER TO UCCHI'S HOUSE TO PLAY THAT DAY?

AND THAT WAS WHEN...

NAKANAI'S MOTHER WALKED IN...

YOU TWO WERE PLAYING IN NAKANAI-KUN'S BEDROOM, RIGHT?

THAT WAS UCCHI'S MOM.

YOU KNEW THAT NAKANAI'S MOTHER HAD BEEN VISITING A HOSPITAL TO RECEIVE TREATMENT FOR AN ILLNESS, RIGHT?

WELL? ANYTHING COME BACK TO YOU?

NO!
TOP! MAMA

GYAHAHA
AHAHAHA
AHAHAHA

!

UCC HI!

GUH...

GFFFAH

GYAHAWA AHAHAHA AHABAHA AHAAHA ABAGAHA

GYHA HAHA AHAH

MY SHIELD!!

AT THAT MOMENT, UCCHI WAS MY...

TH... THAT'S RIGHT.

HH H

BY THE TIME THE POLICE REACHED US, UCCHI HAD ALREADY DIED.

UCCHI'S MOTHER COMMITTED SUICIDE.

WHEN THE PARAMEDICS PULLED UCCHI'S BODY OFF OF MINE, THEY SAID THAT I WAS IN TRULY TERRIBLE SHAPE.

THE KITCHEN KNIFE PIERCED UCCHI'S BODY, WOUNDING ME GRIEVOUSLY.

Ucchi...

UCCHI CLUNG TO ME WITH ALL HIS MIGHT IN HIS EFFORT TO PROTECT ME. HE DIED THAT WAY.

HE'S THE UCCHI THAT I ALWAYS PLAYED WITH.

SOMETIMES I SEE UCCHI IN MY DREAMS. HE'S NEVER THE DIRTY UCCHI OR THE CRUMBLING UCCHI I SAW IN MY COMA.

END

Story 3:
Little Sister
1983.
A TRUE STORY FROM OSAKA.

MY NAME IS KUMI, BUT SHE KEEPS CALLING ME A KUMITORI TOILET!!

YEAH, HER!

SEI-CHAN?

THE SAME GIRL AGAIN?

SINCE YOU'RE THE TOILET, YOU GOTTA TAKE THE *POOP.*

AH...

P L P

S-STO...

MY SISTER KUMI WAS IN THE 3RD GRADE.

I WAS IN THE 6TH GRADE.

YOU NEED TO STAND UP TO HER!

YOU ALWAYS LET THAT GIRL DO WHATEVER SHE WANTS!

I CAN'T DO SOME-THING LIKE THAAAAT!

KUMI WAS A QUIET GIRL. SHE WAS ALWAYS BULLIED BY THE OTHER CHILDREN HER AGE.

IT HAD RAINED FOR DAYS.

THUNDER

HEY, TEACH ME. I WANNA PLAY!

HMM?

HEY SIS?

OF COURSE I DO.

DO YOU KNOW KOKKURI-SAN?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

女

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男

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い き し ち に ひ み り

う く す つ ぬ ふ む ゆ る を

え け せ て ね へ め れ

お こ と の ほ も よ ろ ん

OKAY.

T/N NOTE: KOKKURI-SAN IS A FORTUNE TELLING GAME SIMILAR TO A OUIJA BOARD.

BACK THEN, KOKKURI-SAN WAS A FAD THAT SWEPT THROUGH ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

AWE-SOME!

YOU'RE REALLY AWE-SOME, SIS!

WE'RE READY TO START.

BUT SINCE MY SISTER DIDN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS, SHE'D PROBABLY NEVER PLAYED IT EVEN ONCE.

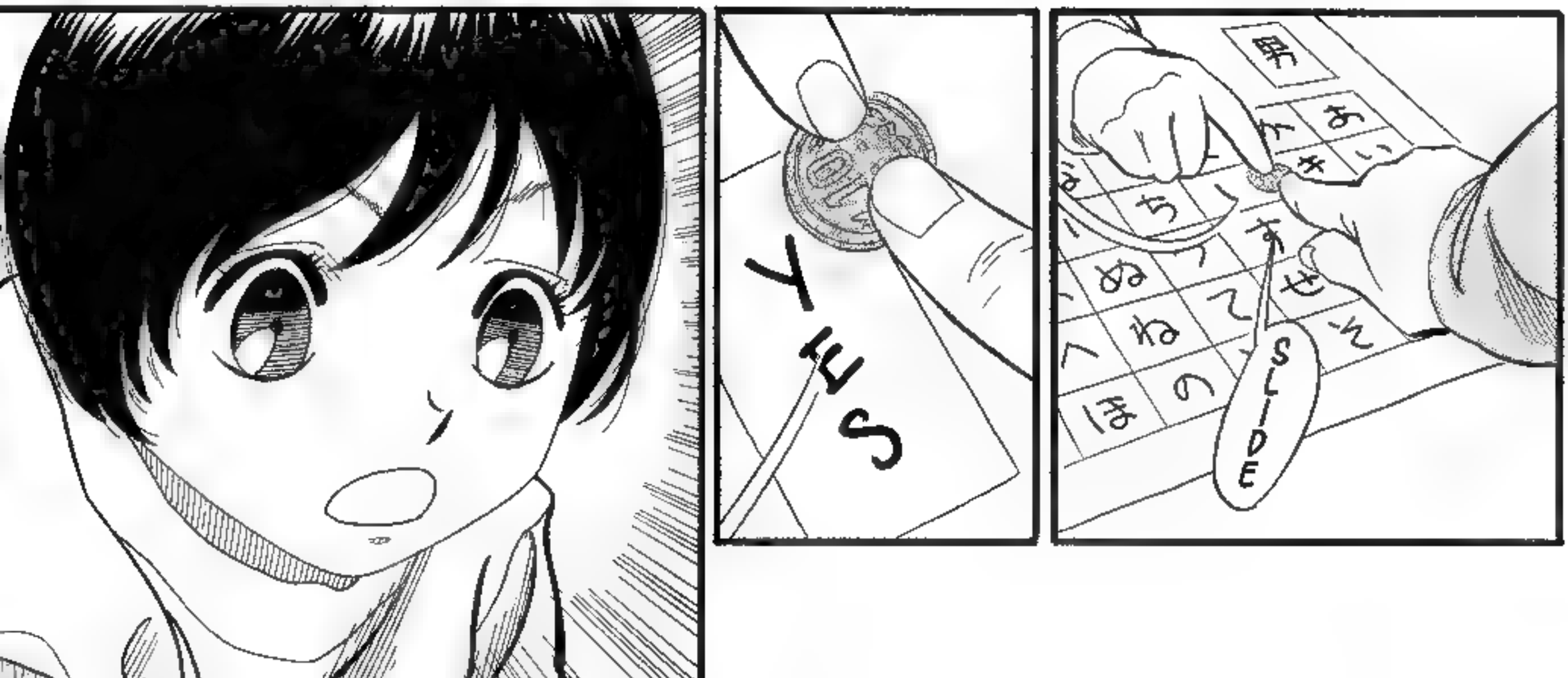
...

YEAH, I GOT IT!

GOT IT?!

NOW, LISTEN UP, KUMI-CHAN. THIS IS REALLY IMPORTANT. NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, DON'T TAKE YOUR FINGER OFF THE COIN?

KOKKURI-SAN, KOKKURI-SAN, ARE YOU HERE AMONG US?



KOKKURI-SAN, KOKKURI-SAN,

WHAT'LL KUMI-CHAN BE WHEN SHE GROWS UP?

THINK THAT'S COOL? JUST YOU WAIT.

THIS IS REALLY COOL, SIS! I DIDN'T EVEN MOVE MY FINGER!

L

O

D

3

P

O

P

MY LITTLE SISTER WAS OVER THE MOON.

EHH?!

A POP IDOL? SO THAT WOULD BE A SINGER, RIGHT?

?

HEY KUMI!!

AH!

?!

YOU CAN'T TAKE YOUR FINGER OFF THE COIN!!

DIDN'T I JUST TELL YOU?!

FOR A SECOND, IT WAS LIKE I COULDN'T SEE HER FACE?!

WHAT WAS THAT?

!

YEAH, SURE. BUT DON'T YOU DARE-

I KNOW.

Y- YEAH...

HEY SIS, CAN I ASK THE NEXT QUESTION?

...

I WON'T LET GO.

!

HOW LONG WILL THE BULLY SEI-CHAN LIVE?

KOKKURI-SAN, KOKKURI-SAN, PLEASE ANSWER MY QUESTION.

SLIDE

SLIDE

!

HEHE HEHE HEHE

THEN SHE'S GONNA DIE REAL SOON, HUH?

UWAAH! ONLY 8 YEARS OLD?!

AHAHA HAHAHA HAHAHA HAHA

KOKKURI-SAN, KOKKURI-SAN,

PLEASE GO AWAY!

PLEAS

WA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

WAHA HAHA HAHA HAHA

FIX

FIX

FIX

JUST WHO ARE YOU?

SLY

YOU HAVE TO LET GO OF KUMI!

JUST GO AWAY ALREADY!!

WAHA HAHA HAHA HAHA

!

I WAS GRATEFUL FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART TO SEE MY SISTER BACK TO NORMAL.

...

Y'KNOW, KOKKURI-SAN WAS A PRETTY FUN GAME, SIS.

BUT SHE HAD CHANGED.

AS IF SHE WERE A DIFFERENT PERSON.

SHE BECAME THE CENTER OF HER CLASS'S ATTENTION.

MY SHY SISTER, EVER A VICTIM OF BULLYING, STARTED TO MINGLE WITH EVERYONE.

SOME EVENINGS AFTER THAT, I WITNESSED SOMETHING.

...

たっ

KUMI-CHAN?

UWAAH!

AAAH!

THE TOILETS IN THAT PARK'S BATHROOM WERE BOAT SHAPED.

THE NEXT MORNING, THE BULLY SEI-CHAN WAS FOUND IN THE SEPTIC TANK. DROWNED. DEAD.

IT'S BEEN MANY YEARS SINCE THEN.

MY SISTER MARRIED AND WAS BLESSED WITH THESE TWO CHILDREN. SHE LIVES IN EASTERN JAPAN NOW.

!

NO ONE EVER SAW ANY CHANGE IN HER.

OUR PARENTS DIDN'T NOTICE A THING.

SIS...

!

BUT SOMETIMES I HEAR IT.

THE VOICE OF THE REAL KUMI-CHAN, THE VOICE I HAVEN'T HEARD SINCE THAT ONE RAINY DAY.

A LONELY VOICE.

END

2

FOR A STORY FROM KANAGAWA PREFECTURE

THAT BUILDING WAS INCREDIBLY STRANGE

使用禁止

使用禁止

Second Floor

立入禁止

立入禁止

FOR NO APPARENT REASON AN OTHERWISE NORMAL SECTION OF THE SECOND FLOOR WAS BLOCKED OFF.

THAT SUMMER, WE HAD LANDED A CONTRACT TO RENOVATE A SIX-FLOOR MIXED USE BUILDING.

I WORK FOR A CONSTRUCTION COMPANY.

THE 5TH AND 6TH HELD A REAL ESTATE COMPANY.

THE 4TH WAS STORAGE FOR THE RAMEN SHOP.

THE 3RD A CRAM SCHOOL.

THE FIRST FLOOR HAD A RAMEN SHOP,

OUR JOB WAS TO REMODEL THE FOURTH AND FIFTH FLOORS AND MOVE THE STORAGE SPACE TO THE SECOND FLOOR.

THE CRAM SCHOOL ON THE THIRD FLOOR WAS DOING GREAT BUSINESS, ENOUGH TO EXPAND TO THE UPPER FLOORS.

'CAUSE IT GOES THROUGH THE SECOND FLOOR?

...

WHY?!

WHAAAT?! WE CAN'T USE THE ELEVA-TOR?!

ITCH ITCH

OH, AND NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, YOU CAN'T USE THE BATHROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR.

IF YOU GOTTA GO, JUST GO TO ANOTHER FLOOR.

HUH?!

THE ELEVATOR IN THIS BUILDING DIDN'T WORK. THOSE LOOKING TO GET TO THE UPPER FLOORS FACED THE UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCE OF HAVING TO USE THE EMERGENCY EXIT.

SHHP

SHHP

SHHP

SHH

HOW WOULD I KNOW?!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PLACE?!

2

HAA

HAA

HAA

HAA

HAA

MAYBE 'CALISE OF THE AIR CONDITIONING FROM THAT RAMEN PLACE DOWNSTAIRS?

WHY INDEED?

THIS FLOOR DOESN'T HAVE ANY AIR CONDITIONING. SO WHY'S IT SO COOL?

A FEW FLOORS UP AND IT'S A SALINA.

FZZT!

CLANG CLANG

BUT IT CAN'T BE. THE RAMEN SHOP ISN'T EVEN OPEN TODAY...

YEAH, MAYBE...

!

HEY!

AH!

2

ha ha ha

PAIN IN THE ASS.

A LITTLE WHILE AGO, THEY WERE MESSING WITH THE SANDER, TOO. THEY'RE A REAL HASSLE.

KIDS FROM THE CRAM SCHOOL, RIGHT?

!

SCRATCH SCRATCH

カカカ
カカカ

IT--
IT'S NOT GOOD TO ITCH IT SO MUCH.

HHH

...WHAT'S WRONG, KID?

MOS-QUITO?

THANKS, MISTER!

HERE.

ぬり ぬり

WE'D RUN INTO EACH OTHER BY THE STAIRS AND HAVE ALL KINDS OF SILLY LITTLE CHATS.

AFTER THAT DAY, THE LITTLE GIRL AND I BECAME PRETTY GOOD BUDDIES.

M- MY...

GUT IS ON FIRE...

UH- UGH...

TWO WEEKS IN, AS THE JOB WAS REACH- ING A CLOSE...

I GOTTA GO BOSS! IT'S AN EMER-GENCY!

GAH

"DON'T USE THE BATHROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR!"

THAT WAS REALLY PRETTY BAD...

WHEW!

GLOOP

!

IS SOME-THING BURN-ING?

HM?

H-
HEY!
HEY!!

WHAT
THE HELL
IS THIS
SHIT?!

AGHH!!

AHH!

AHHHHH!!

!

AH!

...AH!

IF YOU FEEL ANY WORSE, MAYBE GO SEE A DOCTOR.

JUST GO HOME AND TAKE IT EASY FOR TODAY.

I DON'T WANNA COME BACK HERE EVER AGAIN...

BOSS...

SOME-THING'S WRONG WITH THIS PLACE...

...

Y- YEAH... YOU BETCHA.

WELL, JUST TAKE IT EASY TODAY. OKAY, KID?

THERE WERE ALL THESE PEOPLE IN THE STALL. AND THEIR FLESH WAS ON FIRE!!

THAT'S THE MOST RIDIC-

!

IF YOU USE THAT TOILET, THEY'LL JUST GET MAD AT YOU.

HEY MISTER,

SECRET! SECRET! I KNOW A SECRET!

HEHEHE! A SECRET!

SORRY. MY BAD.

LET'S KEEP IT OUR SECRET, HUH?

ALL RIGHT. I'M GOING. I'M GOING

!

I KNOW A SECRET!

WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED IN HERE?! THIS STALL'S BURNT TO A CRISP!

AND WHERE ON EARTH DID THAT LITTLE KID GO?!

OH MY!

SO YOU SAW THAT LITTLE GIRL?!

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, THE OWNER OF THE CRAM SCHOOL CAME FOR A FINAL WALKTHROUGH.

SHE'S BEEN HERE EVER SINCE I STARTED THE SCHOOL.

IT'S REALLY QUITE RARE FOR GROWN-UPS LIKE US TO SEE HER.

AH-HAH...

I HEAR SHE SLIPS INTO CLASSES QUITE A BIT.

SEEMS LIKE LOTS OF THE KIDS TAKING CLASSES CAN SEE HER. NOT ALL OF 'EM THOUGH.

SHE MUST BE SOME KIND OF HOUSEHOLD SPIRIT, RIGHT? THE KIND THAT BRINGS PEOPLE HAPPINESS.

MY BUSI-NESS IS BOOM-ING.

ENOUGH THAT IT EVEN SUR-PRISES ME.

SO THAT'S WHY I THINK...

THIS BOOMING CRAM SCHOOL HAD SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE CITY ONLY TO SUDDENLY IMPLODE IN NONPAYMENT. BANKRUPTCY FOLLOWED.

ABOUT A YEAR LATER,

.....

AFTER OUR RENOVATION HAD ENDED, I HEARD SOME STORIES ABOUT THE PLACE FROM SOME OF MY OTHER COLLEAGUES.

THE LADY WHO RAN THE BUSINESS VANISHED INTO THIN AIR.

THE BUILDING USED TO BE THE SITE OF A CEMETERY FOR VICTIMS OF AIR RAIDS DURING THE WAR.

BYE-BYE, MISTER!

SLAM

ON THE LAST DAY OF WORK THAT SUMMER, THE KIDS FROM THE CRAM SCHOOL WAVED TO ME AS I PACKED UP MY TRUCK.

!

THE LITTLE GIRL THE CRAM SCHOOL LADY HAD CALLED A HOUSEHOLD SPIRIT WAS STANDING AMONG THEM.

THAT HAD TO BE THE REASON THAT SECOND FLOOR WAS BLOCKED OFF.

THAT WASN'T ANY DAMN HOUSEHOLD SPIRIT.

2012.
A STORY
FROM
SAITAMA
PREFEC-
TURE.

Story 5: The Stroller Women

WORK WAS PRETTY LIGHT THAT DAY. IT WAS A BIT EARLY, BUT I HAD LEFT THE OFFICE TO GO GRAB LUNCH.

FWEH!

WH-
WHAT
THE
HELL IS
THAT?

ばさっ
ばさっ
ばさっ

ばさっ
ばさっ
ばさっ

A DOLL?!

ばさっ
ばさっ
ばさっ

LET ME GO...

...

I WON'T DO IT AGAIN.

PLEASE STOP.

SOMEBODY HELP ME...

!

IF YOU SAW SOMETHING THAT STRANGE, YOU WOULD NORMALLY STARE

AND THEN PROBABLY POST PICTURES ONLINE, RIGHT?!

YOU'RE KIDDING?! THOSE TWO JUST IGNORED THEM ALTO-GETHER?!

THE LIGHT'S GREEN, MOTHERFUCKER! LET'S GET A MOVE ON!

AH!

STILL TRYING TO FIGURE OUT EXACTLY WTHAT I HAD WITNESSED, I SAT DOWN FOR LUNCH.

大国屋

I TOOK THE SAME ROUTE BACK TO THE OFFICE AND STOPPED AT THE SAME TRAFFIC LIGHT AS BEFORE.

AHHHH

AHHH
IF YOU TOUCH THE WOUND, YOU MIGHT GET INFECTED!
GRAB HER HANDS!
IT HURTS! HURTS! HURTS!

!
SOMEBODY HELP ME!

LET GO OF ME!!

ばばっ

ばばっ

THE COUPLE FROM BACK THEN?!

PLEASE STOP!

SHE WON'T LISTEN TO ANY-THING!

HAS TO BE ON SOME SORTA DRUGS!

LET GO OF ME!!

SHIT! SHE'S STRONG!

!

SOME PEOPLE WERE SAYING THAT THE GIRL JUST WENT CRAZY. OUT OF NOWHERE. AND THEN THE GUY STARTS TRYING TO CALM HER DOWN, RIGHT?

GET THIS. THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN, SHE STARTS GOING AFTER HIM. SHE BITES HIS NOSE OFF, AND GOUGES OUT HIS EYES, AND...

...

YEAH, THAT'LL HAPPEN EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.

YOU WERE ON X STREET, RIGHT?

THIS IS OUR PRESIDENT, NEARLY 90 YEARS OLD.

WA HA HA HA HA HA HA

LONG TIME AGO, THERE USED TO BE A PRETTY NASTY SOUNDING ASYLUM OVER THERE.

SEEMS LIKE ALL THE PATIENTS IN THERE WERE TREATED PRETTY BADLY.

PLEASE STOP.

PLEASE FORGIVE ME.

WHEN I WAS LITTLE, CRAZY BASTARDS LIKE THAT WERE RUNNING AROUND EVERYWHERE!

WA HAHA HA!

SOMEONE FINALLY CAUGHT ON TO THE FACT THAT PEOPLE WERE DYIN' IN THERE, RIGHT?

AND THE DIRECTOR, DOCTORS, AND EVEN THE NURSES WERE ALL HAULED OFF TO THE CLINK.

WHAT I SAW BACK THEN WAS...

THEN...

SQUEAK

SQUEAK

NK

NK

NK

SQUEAK

SQUEAK

KTHK

AAAA

ドドドドド

LET ME GO...
LET ME GO...
LET ME GO...

LET ME GO...
LET ME GO...
LET ME GO...

ドドドドド

ドドドドド

!

UWAH...

AH...

LET ME GO
LET ME GO
LET ME GO

LET ME GO
LET ME GO
LET ME GO

WHEN WILL YOU SET ME FREE?

UWAAH

WHEN

I HAVE NO DESIRE TO SPEAK OF WHAT TRANSPIRED NEXT.

END

Story 6: Interference, part I

IN A CERTAIN TOWN IN KOUCHI PREFECTURE, THERE EXISTS IN FOLK RECORDS A CURSE CALLED THE "INUGAMI."

A LIVING DOG IS BURIED IN EARTH UP TO ITS NECK. RAW MEAT IS PROFFERED TO IT YET PLACED BEYOND THE REACH OF ITS MOUTH AND TONGUE.

THE DOG IS STARVED FOR SEVERAL DAYS.

ONCE THE DOG'S ANGUISH AND RAGE HAVE REACHED A FEVER PITCH, ITS HEAD IS SEVERED.

IT IS SAID THAT THE DOG'S STARVATION-INDUCED MADNESS AND MALICE WILL REBOUND INTO A POWERFUL CURSE.

I GUESS IT HAD BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE YOU'D LAST GONE HOME.

HOW WAS YOUR MOM'S FUNERAL?

WELL,

SOMETHING HAPPENED THERE THAT I STILL DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND.

2010. IBARAKI PRECTURE. MY THEN GIRLFRIEND WAS TELLING ME A STORY OF HER VISIT HOME.

OUR DATE SEEMED NORMAL.

IT SMELLED LIKE I WAS IN A REALLY FILTHY DOG HOUSE.

LIKE, STRONG ENOUGH TO STING YOUR EYES.

HOW SHOULD I PUT IT?

MUSKY.

LIKE SOME KIND OF *ANIMAL* SMELL.

WHEN I GOT TO THE FUNERAL HOME, SOMETHING THERE SMELLED REALLY BAD.

BUT I SOON DISCOVERED THE SOURCE OF THAT STENCH.

!

OH, MIKA-CHAN! LONG TIME NO SEE!

IT WAS COMING FROM MY UNCLE.

YEAH.

HE WAS THE ONE WHO WAS ADOPTED INTO THAT RICH GIRL'S FAMILY WHEN HE GOT MARRIED, RIGHT?

OH, THAT GOLD DIGGER, HUH?

SEVEN YEARS AGO,

HE MOVED INTO HIS WIFE'S FATHER'S ESTATE.

AS SOON AS HE WAS MARRIED, HE FOUND HIMSELF IN A PRETTY DIRE SITUATION.

NOT AT ALL.

THAT SOUNDS REALLY GREAT!

OH WOW!

?!

MORN-ING.

GOOD MORN-ING.

GOOD MORNING, FATHER-IN-LAW.

SLURP SLURP

SLURP

!

HASN'T THE WEATHER BEEN JUST GRAND?

OH, KEN-KUN. GOOD MORNING!

N- NO... NOTHING...

!

HUH? WHAT'S WRONG?

SKRTCH

SKRTCH

BEFORE LONG, HIS WIFE NOTICED THESE CHANGEES, TOO. THEY BOTH BEGAN TO WORRY. THEN ONE NIGHT...

HIS INTELLECTUAL FATHER-IN-LAW BEGAN TO DISPLAY ALL THESE ODD BEHAVIORS.

THUD

!

NGH...

SKRATCH

SKRATCH

SKRATCH

EH?!

F-F-F-FATHER-IN-LAW?!

!

GGG RRG...

G...

FATHER-IN-LAW!

WH- WH-WHAT'S WRONG?!

HIS HANDS AND FEET ARE COVERED IN MUD.

G...
G...
GG...
GRG...

WHAT'S GOING ON? IS SOMETHING WRONG?

...

AROOOO

HE BEGAN RECEIVING TREATMENT, BUT HIS SYMPTOMS ONLY CONTINUED TO WORSEN.

SUCH BEHAVIOR RECURRED TIME AND AGAIN. THEY VISITED A DOCTOR WHO DIAGNOSED HIM AS HAVING A FORM OF SENILE DEMENTIA.

CURSING.

VIOLENCE.

PROWLING AT NIGHT.

EATING FECES.

ONLY A YEAR AFTER HIS DIAGNOSIS, MY UNCLE'S FATHER-IN-LAW PASSED AWAY.

DURING HIS NIGHTLY PROWLING, HE HAD STRAYED ONTO A NATIONAL HIGHWAY.

HE WAS LYING NAKED ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD WHEN A PASSING CAR CRUSHED HIM. THEY SAID THAT HIS MANGLED BODY LOOKED LIKE A DOG'S CARCASS.

BUT THAT'S NOT THE END OF IT.

OR RATHER, WHAT HAPPENED NEXT IS WHERE IT REALLY STARTS GETTING CRAZY.

WHAT A CRAZY STORY!

YUCK!

AT FIRST, IT WAS JUST LITTLE THINGS LIKE GOING SHOPPING BUT FORGETTING HER WALLET AT HOME, RIGHT?

HUH?

AFTER MY UNCLE'S FATHER-IN-LAW DIED, HIS *WIFE* STARTED ACTING ODD.

HELLO. THIS IS OFFICER K FROM POLICE STATION M.

AH!

SH-SHE DID IT AGAIN?!

THIS IS YASUI.

BUT BEFORE LONG...

RING RING RING

I'M VERY SORRY

I'LL BE THERE RIGHT AWAY TO PICK HER UP!!

YES, SIR. THAT'S RIGHT.

YOUR WIFE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN ON HER WAY HOME WHEN SHE LOST HER WAY.

A PASSERBY WAS KIND ENOUGH TO ALERT US TO HER DILEMMA.

WAH!

!

WHEN MY UNCLE LEARNED OF HIS WIFE'S CONDITION AT THE TIME THE POLICE TOOK HER INTO PROTECTIVE CUSTODY, HE WAS IN UTTER SHOCK.

FOR, YOU SEE, HIS WIFE WAS...

NO WAY!

WHAT A TERRIBLE SIGHT...

ペタ
ペタ
ペタ

...

HIS
WIFE WAS
DOWN ON
ALL FOURS,
CRAWLING...

AND ACCORDING TO THE WITNESSES WHO GAVE THEIR STATEMENTS TO THE POLICE, HIS WIFE'S FACE LOOKED JUST LIKE THAT OF A DOG.

FIRST, HIS FATHER-IN-LAW WENT NUTS, CRAWLED OUT ONTO A HIGHWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, AND DIED JUST LIKE A DOG.

YOU SAID THAT YOUR UNCLE HAD THAT WEIRD ANIMAL STENCH WHEN YOU SAW HIM AT THE FUNERAL.

...

THEN YOUR UNCLE'S WIFE STARTED WANDERING AROUND TOWN ON HER HANDS AND FEET AND EVERYONE SAID THAT SHE HAD A FACE JUST LIKE A DOG, RIGHT?

BUT WHAT DO DOGS HAVE TO DO WITH ANY OF THIS AT ALL?

HIS JOB?!

THAT IT MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH MY UNCLE'S JOB.

WELL, SOME OF MY RELA-TIVES WERE SAYING...

SEE, MY UNCLE IS A DOG BREEDER.

...

I THINK THE DOGS MAY HAVE CURSED HIM.

END

HAA

HAA

HAA

HAA

HAA

Story 7:

Interference, part III

MY GIRLFRIEND'S UNCLE HAD MARRIED INTO A WEALTHY FAMILY THAT OWNED A PALATIAL ESTATE.

HER UNCLE DEARLY LOVED DOGS. HE EAGLERY SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY THE ESTATE'S LARGE REAR GARDEN OFFERED AND BEGAN A DOG BREEDING BUSINESS.

YOU REALLY HAD ME GOING THERE. THEN THAT SMELL MUST HAVE JUST BEEN FROM HIS WORK, RIGHT?

THEN I SAW SOMETHING AT THE FUNERAL HOME...

BUT...

WELL, I MEAN, MAYBE...

奥村 博二

田山 花袋

IT'S BEEN SUCH A LONG TIME!

WHY, I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE YOU WERE IN HIGH SCHOOL.

AH, HAS IT REALLY BEEN THAT LONG?

!

WHEN MY UNCLE STARTED HIS JOB,

THERE USED TO BE A SMALL SHRINE IN THE ESTATE'S GARDEN. HE HAD IT DEMOLISHED.

WHAT THE HECK?!

YOU SAW A GHOST DOG?!

...

YES, PLEASE!

THIS THING WILL GET IN THE WAY OF ALL THE CARS COMING THROUGH.

YOU SURE YOU REALLY WANT ME TO DO THIS?

SIR,

I MEAN, IT *IS* A SHRINE.

I WAS A BIT WORRIED TOO. THE DAY AFTER THE FUNERAL, I WENT OVER TO MY UNCLE'S HOUSE.

HEY! HEY!

THAT'S REALLY, REALLY BAD NEWS!

YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!

WHAT A GROSS SMELL...

IT'S ALMOST LIKE A ZOO...

DING DONG

...

!

SINCE I AM HIS NIECE, IT SHOULD BE FINE TO LET MYSELF IN, RIGHT?

WOOF
WOOF
WOOF

!

IT ALL LOOKS KINDA SHABBY...

!

COULD HE BE IN THE KENNEL OUT BACK?

OPEN

わんわん王国

IT-
IT REEKS!

ARE THOSE FLIES?!

3"
3"
3"
3"
3"

WHAT'S THAT BLACK SMOKE OVER BY THAT HOLE...?

WHAT ON EARTH COULD BE IN THAT HOLE...?!

!

OH, MIKA-CHAN! WELCOME!

IT'S BEEN SUCH A LONG TIME, HUH?!

?!

OVER HERE! OVER HERE!

THAT VOICE... THAT WAS MY UNCLE'S WIFE...

...

COULD YOU PUT IT IN MY MOUTH?

I WOULD DEARLY LIKE TO EAT IT, BUT I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO REACH IT.

I'M SORRY TO BOTHER YOU, BUT, SEE, THIS MEAT...

!

UWAH!

I'M SO DAMN HUNGRY I COULD DIE!

DID YOU HEAR ME?!

HEY!

I TOLD YOU TO PUT IT IN MY FUCKING MOUTH!!

AHH!

UNCLE?!

HIYA MIKA-CHAN.

AHH!

YEP, THIS BUSINESS HAS BEEN A TOTAL WASH.

IT'S ACTUALLY A REALLY HARD INDUSTRY FOR A NEWBIE LIKE ME TO GET A START IN.

PRETTY AWFUL, HUH?

I'VE JUST TURNED INTO A MEAL TICKET FOR MY SUPPLIERS.

I WASN'T USED TO RAISING SO MANY DOGS AT ONCE TIME. AND I DIDN'T HAVE ANY CONNECTIONS IN THE FIELD EITHER.

AND THE MORE DOGS YOU HAVE, THE MORE EXPENSIVE FOOD AND VACCINE COSTS GET.

BUT WHEN I HAD THEM MATE, EVEN WHEN THEY DID HAVE PUPPIES, I COULDN'T SELL THEM.

SEE, I FOLLOWED THEIR ADVICE AND BOUGHT THESE REALLY EXPENSIVE HIGH PEDIGREE DOGS.

!

WURF

AND IF YOU PACK THE KENNELS TOO FULL, SICKNESS WILL START SPREADING AND A WHOLE BUNCH WILL DIE OFF.

DIG

AND EVEN DISPOSING OF THEIR CARCASSES COSTS A FORTUNE.

Y'KNOW, THERE USED TO BE A WEIRD LITTLE SHRINE SOMEWHERE AROUND HERE.

SO I'M PUTTING ALL OF IT IN THIS HOLE RIGHT HERE.

BUT IT LOOKED LIKE SOME OF THOSE DOGS WERE STILL ALIVE...

GOOD

GOOD

A LITTLE BIT MORE TILL WHAT?

!

JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE NOW.

OH, SHE'S NICE AND STARVING.

TILL I TAKE OFF HER HEAD!

GUH...

OOH

AHH!

SHE'S REALLY WELL VERSED ON CURSES, RITUALS, AND ALL THAT STUFF.

I TOLD ONE OF MY RELATIVES ABOUT ALL OF THIS.

.....

SHE SAYS THAT THERE'S A CEREMONY CALLED THE "INUGAMI."

YOU BURY A DOG UP TO ITS NECK IN THE GROUND, STARVE IT, AND THEN CHOP OFF ITS HEAD.

AND WITHOUT ANYWHERE TO GO, THESE CURSES REBOUNDED ON MY UNCLE AND HIS FAMILY.

MY RELATIVE SAID THAT MY UNCLE MUST HAVE BEEN CREATING CURSE AFTER CURSE WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING WHAT HE WAS DOING.

AND YOU USE THAT DOG'S HATRED AND RESENTMENT TO POWER A CURSE.

...

IT'S ALL SO SCARY...

!

OH, BUT SOMETHING GOOD'S HAP-PENED, TOO!!

I GOT A CALL FROM MY UNCLE A FEW DAYS AGO.

AND HE SAID THAT IF SOMETHING EVER HAPPENS TO HIM, HE'LL GIVE THE MANSION, AND THE BUSINESS, AND ALL THE REST TO ME!

CRAZY, RIGHT?

HE GAVE HER EVERY-THING.

THREE YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE THEN. YESTERDAY, SHE RECEIVED THE NEWS OF HER UNCLE'S DEATH. TRUE TO HIS WORD, HE REALLY DID GIVE HER EVERYTHING.

END

Story 8:

The Black House

B-
BOSS...
L- LOOK
OVER
THERE!

HUH?

YUCK!

LOOKS
LIKE THAT
CROW UP
THERE IS
EATING A
KITTEN!

HEY.

I'M
TRYING
TO EAT
HERE.

KNOCK
IT OFF.

AH...
ER...
MY BAD.

I RUN A SMALL CONTRACTING FIRM IN SAITAMA.

THAT DAY, WE HAD ARRIVED AT APARTMENT COMPLEX B IN THE TOKYO SUBURBS.

THE YOUNG COUPLE WHO LIVED THERE HAD ASKED US TO RENOVATE THEIR ENTIRE APARTMENT.

WE HAD TWO DAYS.

YES, MISS?

WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

EXCUSE ME.

WITH JUST ME AND TAKEDA, A ROOKIE, THE LABOR WAS QUITE TOUGH. THEN, JUST WHEN THE END WAS IN SIGHT...

PLEASE SEND THIS EMPLOYEE AWAY.

!

NO. I JUST DO NOT WANT HIM HERE ANY LONGER.

DID HE DAMAGE YOUR FURNITURE?!

EH?! WHAT DID YOU DO, TAKEDA?!

JUST GET HIM AWAY FROM HERE!

IF THIS GUY DID ANYTHING TO UPSET YOU, THEN-

EXCUSE ME, MISS.

OKAY.

...

AH...

I HAD TO WORK MY ASS OFF, BUT I SOMEHOW MANAGED TO FINISH EVERYTHING MYSELF BY THE END OF THAT SECOND DAY.

AND THAT WAS THE END OF IT. I SENT TAKEDA TO ANOTHER JOB SITE AND COMPLETED THE REST OF THE WORK MYSELF.

THAT EVENING, I QUESTIONED TAKEDA ABOUT WHAT OCCURRED. HE TOLD ME AN EERIE STORY.

ふふ

...

SO WE WERE COVERING EVERYTHING WITH VINYL TARPS TO MAKE SURE WE DIDN'T HURT ANY OF THEIR STUFF, RIGHT?

WELL, I WAS WORKING IN THIS ONE JAPANESE STYLE TATAMI ROOM. AND THERE WAS THIS DRESSER THING THAT HAD ALREADY BEEN COVERED UP, RIGHT?

rustle

SO I THOUGHT THAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN SO VALUABLE THAT OUR CLIENTS HAD COVERED IT THEMSELVES.

rustle

rustle

AH...

スリ

...

rustle

rustle

UWAH!!

OH

FLAP

FLAP

AHH!

WHAT THE HELL?! WHY IS A CROW HANGING FROM THEIR ALTAR?!

SPLAT

LEAVE THIS ROOM AT ONCE.

EEK!

GET OUT.

...

...

AND SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED...

BUT THAT JOB'S OVER. NONE OF IT MATTERS ANYMORE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS YOU REALLY SAW IN THERE.

...

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT HAP-PENED!

HEY BOSS!

DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT!

ANYWAY, I KNOW YOU'RE NOT THE TYPE TO SHOW UP DRUNK TO WORK.

Y- YEAH, OKAY.

THAT NIGHT, TAKEDA TOOK THE COMPANY VAN HOME.

...

TAKEDA, WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU?

THE NEXT DAY, TAKEDA DIDN'T SHOW UP FOR WORK.

HE WOULDN'T PICK UP HIS CELL PHONE EITHER.

AH!

TAKEDA

BEEP BEEP

KRAW KRAAAW KRAAW KRAAAW KRAW KRAAAW

UWAH!

KRAAAW KRAAAW KRAW KRAAAW KRAAAW

KRAAAAAAAW KRAW KRAW KRAAAAW KRAAAAAAAW

Help... Me...

...

KRAAAW KRAW B- Boss... KRAW KRAAAW KRAW

AFTER THAT CALL, TAKEDA SEEMED TO HAVE VANISHED.

BZZZT

A MONTH LATER, THE COMPANY VAN WAS FOUND WAY UP IN THE MOUNTAINS.

THEY FOUND TAKEDA INSIDE. SOMETHING (PROBABLY CROWS) HAD BEEN FEASTING ON WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIS CORPSE.

I LEARNED THAT MANY OF MY COLLEAGUES SHARED EERIE FEELINGS ABOUT THAT APARTMENT COMPLEX.

SOME DAYS LATER, I HAD A TRADE ASSOCIATION DINNER. I TOLD THEM THIS STORY.

MANY OF THESE FLEDGLING HOUSEHOLDS SEEMED TO BE WEALTHY ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO AFFORD FANCY SHRINES. (ALTHOUGH NO ONE ELSE HAD SEEN A HEADLESS CROW DANGLING FROM ANY OF THE OTHERS.)

EVEN THOUGH THE COMPLEX WAS FULL OF RATHER YOUNG COUPLES,

ONE FELLOW HAD SEEN SOMETHING WEIRD IN A NEARBY PARK.

TIE

THUMP

HEY NOW!

WAAH!

...

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

I HAD ONLY LOOKED AWAY FOR A SECOND.

AH, PLEASE EXCUSE ME.

ANOTHER FELLOW HAD BEEN THERE WHEN A MAN FELL TO HIS DEATH.

BOSS, YOU KNOW THIS GUY?

!

WH- WHY IS HE HERE...?

SEEMS HE HAD A PLAN TO LEVEL THE COMPLEX AND REDEVELOP THE WHOLE AREA FROM THE GROUND UP.

TURNS OUT THAT THE DEAD GUY WAS THIS HIGHER-UP IN THIS BIG CONSTRUCTION COMPANY THAT USED TO SEND US SOME JOBS EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, RIGHT?

AND SO MY BOSS FILLED ME IN ON WHAT HAPPENED LATER.

AND THERE WASN'T ANY SIGN ON THE ROOF THAT HE HAD JUMPED OFF OR MET AN ACCIDENT, RIGHT?

BUT THE WEIRD THING WAS THAT THE DOOR TO THE ROOF WAS CHAINED SHUT, RIGHT?

...

IN OTHER WORDS, HE MUST HAVE BEEN IN ONE OF THE APART-MENTS, RIGHT? AND SO THE REAL QUESTION IS WHETHER HE FELL OUT OR WHETHER HE WAS ***PUSHED*** OUT.

AH!! YEAH, THAT HAP-PENS!

HE WENT OVER TO CHANGE SOME LOOKS AND ...OUND THE BODY OF ...IS GUY WHO HAD ...ED ALONE IN HIS APARTMENT.

Y'KNOW, I REMEMBER HEARING A WEIRD STORY TEN YEARS AGO OR SO ABOUT A YOUNG GUY WORKING OVER THERE.

D- DON'T BE STUPID!

SOMETHING THAT CRAZY COULD NEVER HAPPEN!

CHEE

CHEE

AND SO THIS DEAD GUY'S BURNED UP BODY GETS UP AND STARTS WALKING RIGHT TOWARDS HIM.

...

DON'T BE SO SURE. WE'RE TALKING ABOUT *THAT* COMPLEX. EVEN SOMETHING LIKE A DEAD MAN WALKING DOESN'T SOUND SO IMPOSSIBLE.

IT FELT LIKE SOMETHING WAS GOING ON IN THERE.

THE NEXT DAY I WAS TRAVELING FROM JOB SITE TO JOB SITE, PASSED THAT APARTMENT COMPLEX, AND STOPPED MY CAR.

?!

THEY OPENED UP THE PORCH DOOR TO LET CROWS IN?!

I SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON FROM UP THERE.

キョロ

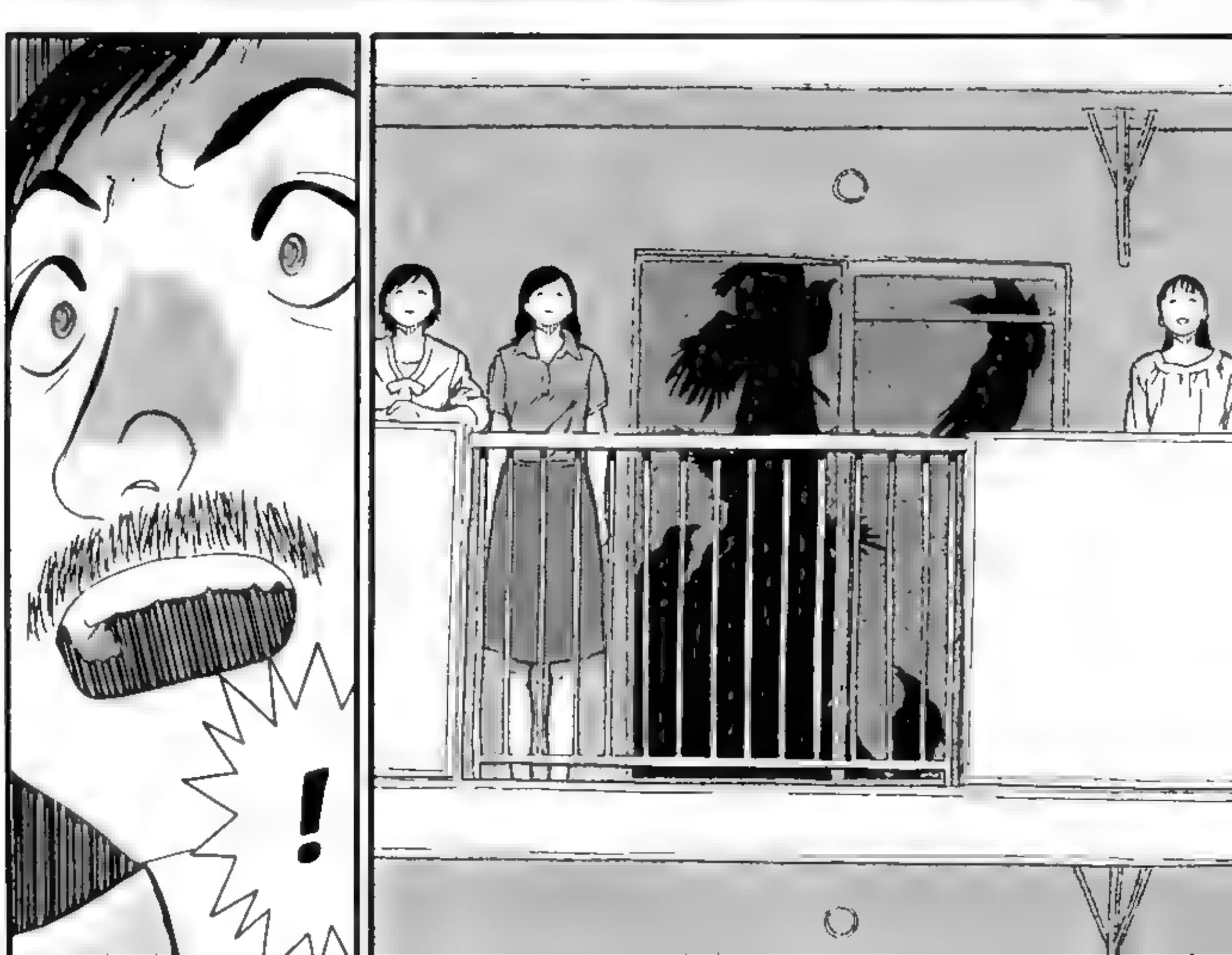
キョロ

FLAP

ドドドド

SHIT.
THAT'S
FAR.

MAYBE WITH THE ZOOM ON THIS THING...


!

WAAH!

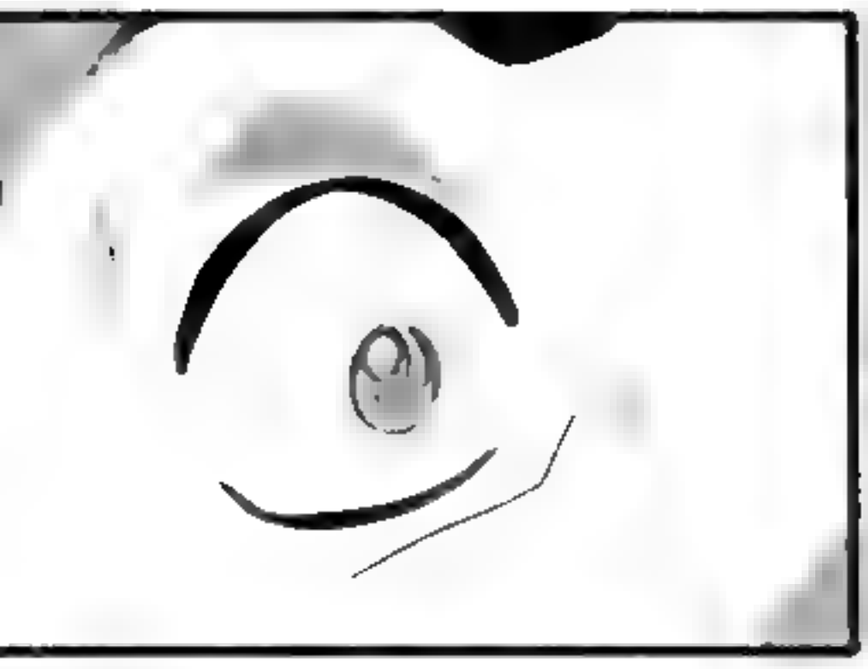
AHHH!

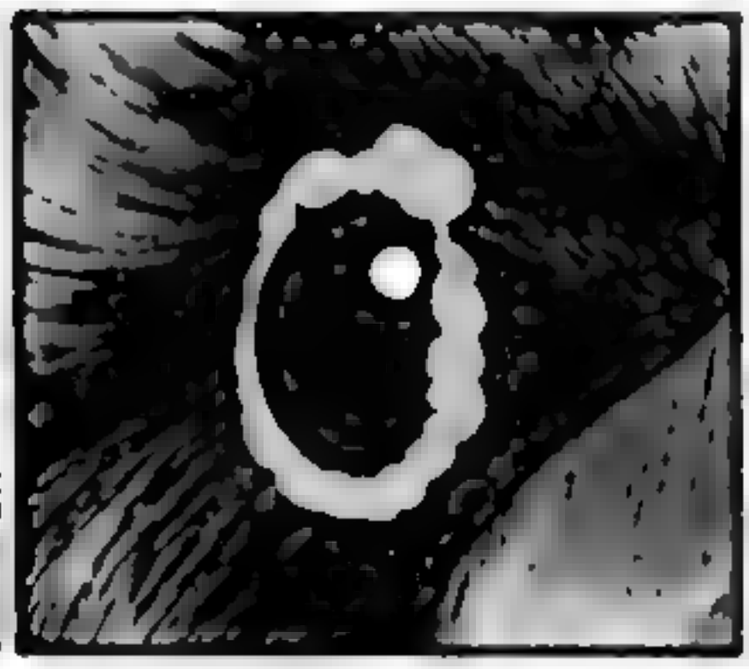
HOLY CRAP!!

!

THUMP

CRACK





THUMP
THUMP
THUMP

THE CROW PERCHING ON THE ROOF OF MY VAN LET FORTH ONE LOUD SHRIEK

AN INCOMING SIGNALING THAT SOMETHING WAS ABOUT TO START

あとがき

IT HAS BEEN 15 YEARS SINCE I ADAPTED "JOYUREI" INTO A MANGA. AND AS WE MOVED CLOSER AND CLOSER TO SERIALIZATION, I WAS FILLED WITH WORRY.

GAP

I AM DEEPLY HONORED TO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ADAPT "KURO IHON" INTO A MANGA.

HONOR

IF READERS OF THIS VOLUME OR FANS OF THE ORIGINAL SERIES WERE ABLE TO ENJOY THIS OFFERING IN THE SLIGHTEST, THEN I AM WHOLEHEARTEDLY HAPPY.

SALES

MOREOVER, I KNEW I COULD NOT FORGIVE MYSELF FOR DISGRACING THE GOOD NAME OF THE ORIGINAL WORK AND LABORED WITH ALL MY MIGHT TO DRAW THIS AS WELL AS I COULD.

I FIRST MET TAKAMINATO-SENSEI THROUGH TEXT MESSAGES. AS I WENT TO MEET HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME, I WAS VERY EXCITED THAT THE AUTHOR OF THE "KYOU NO HON" SERIES WOULD WANT TO TURN MY "IHON" SERIES INTO A MANGA. OUR MEETING WAS VERY PLEASANT, AND WE WALKED AWAY WITH THE DECISION TO PROGRESS TOWARDS SERIALIZATION, BUT ONE THING CAME AS INCREDIBLE SHOCK TO BOTH MY EDITOR AND ME. WE BOTH THOUGHT THAT HE WOULD WANT TO ADAPT "AKA IHON," BUT HE HAD INSTEAD PROFFERED AN ADAPTATION OF "KURO IHON."

"WHAT IS KURO IHON?"

IT IS A COLLECTION OF MYSTERIOUS ACCOUNTS AND BIZARRE STORIES THAT THEN GARNERED SIGNIFICANT ATTENTION. THE PEOPLE WHO TOLD THESE STORIES WERE ALL LAUGHED AT AND RIDICULED.

... AND HE WANTED TO TURN THAT INTO A MANGA.

I MAY HAVE BEEN WORRIED, BUT SINCE TAKAMINATO-SENSEI HAD PERSONALLY REQUESTED TO ADAPT IT, I HAD NO CHOICE.GIVEN THE MANY MASTERPIECES OF THE HORROR GENRE HAD PRODUCED, I THOUGHT EVERYTHING WOULD BE OKAY.

AND PRAYING THAT NOTHING UNTOWARD WOULD HAPPEN, SERIALIZATION APPROACHED.

BUT...

AT THE START OF SERIALIZATION, I RECEIVED THE TERRIBLE NEWS THAT TAKAMINATO-SENSEI'S MOTHER HAD COLLAPSED AND HAD TO BE HOSPITALIZED. NO IMMEDIATE DANGER THREATENED HER LIFE, BUT ON RETURNING FROM THE HOSPITAL, SHE REQUIRED DILIGENT NURSING. THERE WAS NO WAY THAT HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MATCH THE RIGORS THAT ACCOMPANY MONTHLY SERIALIZATION. HOWEVER, TAKAMINATO-SENSEI PLUNGED ON. HE WORKED ON THIS MANGA ALL THE WHILE TAKING CARE OF HIS MOTHER. IT WAS TERRIBLY COSTLY ENDEAVOR. DAY BY, I WATCHED HIM GROW MORE HAGGARD. I COULDN'T FIND THE WORDS TO APPROACH HIM. ... BECAUSE IT ALMOST SEEMED AS THOUGH IT ALL HAPPENED BECAUSE HE WAS WORKING ON "KURO IHON."

THUS, WE HAVE COME TO RELEASE THIS VOLUME. WE WILL WATCH ITS SALES TO DETERMINE WHETHER WE WILL RELEASE A FOLLOW-UP. I WOULD LIKE THIS VOLUME TO SELL WELL. BUT AT THE SAME TIME, I WOULD NOT LIKE TO CAUSE TAKAMINATO-SENSEI ANY FURTHER UNHAPPINESS. MY HEART IS CLOUDED.

IF WE SHOULD SERIALIZE A SECOND WORK, LET'S DO "AKA IHON" THIS TIME, TAKAMINATO-SENSEI. "KURO IHON" IS SERIOUSLY BAD NEWS.

HOKAZONO MASAYA, MAY 2015

one snowshoe is recruiting the following:

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- typesetters (multiple titles)
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